

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00
NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 COME-00 EB-07
LAB-04 SIL-01 CU-02 A-01 OPR-02 SY-05 OC-06 CCO-00
MMO-01 TRSE-00 OMB-01 MCT-01 AID-05 /091 W
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R 201015Z JAN 77
FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8450
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DIA WASHDC

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE BANGKOK 1603

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y T E X T S U M M A R Y (JAN VICE JULY)

EO 11652: N/A
TAGS: PGOV PINT TH
SUBJECT: LABOR AND STUDENT STRIKES

REF: BANGKOK 1056

SUMMARY: THAI LABORERS WENT ON STRIKE IN TWO LOCATIONS
ON JAN 19 AND VOCATIONAL STUDENTS WENT ON STRIKE IN
SINGBURI ON JAN 17 & 18 OVER THE TRANSFER OF A TEACHER.
END SUMMARY.

1. SEVERAL HUNDRED CIVILIAN EMPLOYEES AT THE ROYAL THAI
NAVY'S DOCKYARD IN THONBURI STAGED A WILDCAT STRIKE ON
JAN 19. THE STRIKE WAS INITIALLY IN PROTEST AGAINST A
RULING PROHIBITING WORKERS FROM ENTERING THE DOCKYARD BEFORE
0730. ACCORDING TO THAI LANGUAGE NEWSPAPERS OF JAN 20,
A GROUP OF WORKERS ALSO SUBMITTED A LIST OF FOUR DEMANDS
TO DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE DOCKYARD REAR ADM PHALITDET
RUMAKHOM: 1) A TWO-STEP SALARY INCREASE FOR ALL DOCKYARD
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EMPLOYEES; 2) REVISION IN THE TIMES FOR ENTERING
AND LEAVING THE DOCKYARD; 3) PROMOTION OF THW WORKERS
WELFARE; AND 4) "AN AMNESTY" FOR THE STRIKING WORKERS.

2. ADM PHALITDET IS QUOTED BY SEVERAL NEWSPAPERS AS
EXPLAINING THAT THE STRIKE OCCURRED BECAUSE OF A MIS-
UNDERSTANDING OVER WORKING HOURS ON THE PART JF SECURITY

OFFICIALS. HE SAID THAT MOST OF THE WORKERS HAD RETURNED TO THEIR JOBS AFTER HE ISSUED A CLARIFICATION (AND ALSO A WARNING THAT THE STRIKE WAS AGAINST THE LAW). A NAVY OFFICIAL TOLD DATT ON JAN 20 THAT ALL WORKERS ARE NOW BACK ON THE JOB, BUT NO SETTLEMENT WAS MADE PUBLIC. SPECIAL BRANCH POLICE ARE REPORTEDLY INVESTIGATING THE STRIKE TO DETERMINE WHO ORGANIZED IT.

3. ANOTHER APPARENTLY UNRELATED STRIKE OCCURRED ON JAN 19 WHEN ABOUT 800 WOMEN WORKERS WALKED OFF THEIR JOBS AT THE SAENG FA BATTERY FACTORY IN BANGKHAE DISTRICT OF BANGKOK. PRESS REPORTS INDICATED THAT THE WORKERS DEMANDED A THREE BAHT PER DAY SALARY INCREASE, AND RETURNED TO WORK THE SAME DAY WHEN MANAGEMENT AGREED TO THEIR DEMANDS.

4. ACCORDING TO THAI LANGUAGE NEWSPAPERS, VOCATIONAL STUDENTS WENT ON A PROTEST STRIKE ON JAN 17 AT A VOCATIONAL SCHOOL IN SINGBURI PROVINCE TO PROTEST THE TRANSFER OF ONE OF THEIR TEACHERS. LAST REPORTS INDICATED THAT THE PROBLEM HAD NOT BEEN RESOLVED AS OF JAN 18, AND THE STUDENTS WERE STILL ON STRIKE.

5. COMMENT: LABOR STRIKES AND STUDENT PROTESTS ARE ILLEGAL IN THAILAND BY ORDER OF THE NATIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM COUNCIL WHICH TOOK POWER ON OCT 6, 1976. THESE ARE THE FIRST SINCE THE COUP. WE HAVE LITTLE INFORMATION ON THE REPORTED PROTEST IN SINGBURI, AND THE TWO WOLDCAT STRIKES WERE STAGED BY NON-UNION WORKERS IN AN APPARENTLY SPONTANEOUS MANNER. WHAT IS SIGNIFICANT IS THAT THERE HAS BEEN NO REPORTED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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REACTION FROM THE THANIN GOVERNMENT, AND IN ONE CASE AT LEAST, THE STRIKE WAS SUCCESSFUL. THE RESULTS MAY ENCOURAGE OTHERS, PARTICULARLY LABORERS, AND FURTHER WORK STOPPAGES COULD BRING LABOR AND THE RTG INTO DIRECT AND UNPLEASANT CONFRONTATION.

WHITEHOUSE

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Message Attributes

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Sent Date: 20-Jan-1977 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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Disposition Remarks:
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